A Thousand Splendid Suns

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Summary Entry #3

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This part of the story is set from another point of view of a young girl named Laila who lives in the city of Kabul. Kabul is currently under the strict, horrific hold of the Mujahideen. Laila’s two brothers, Ahmad and Noor, were off at war to overthrow Najibullah who was the leader of the Mujahideen. Laila’s mom, Mammy, and her father, Babi, have been married for a long time and all they both await the day when their two sons arrive back home from war. Mammy is too blinded by the lust for her sons return that she doesn’t pay enough attention to Laila. Babi, however, does. He loves his little girl and wants the best for her. He wants her to get an education and succeed in life and make a name for herself. Mammy doesn’t show much affection for Laila and forgets to pick her up from school a lot and forces her to walk home by herself a lot. One day in particular, Mammy forgot to pick Laila up and when she was walking home a neighborhood boy by the name of Khadim pointed a toy gun at her face. Khadim was good friends with Laila’s crush Tariq. Tariq was off at war and therefore couldn’t protect Laila. Khadim proceeded to squirt her with what she thought would be water. It was Urine. Laila went home and washed up and told Mammy but Mammy seemed to not care at all. You come to realize quickly that Mammy doesn’t care for Laila very much but at times does show some affection. Although her mom couldn’t comfort her, Babi still did. Laila and Babi had a very strong relationship.

In the next following weeks Tariq arrived home and Laila was exstatic. Triq and Laila have been very good friends since they were little but never thought anything of it. He had his leg amputated in the war because he was injured badly. Tariq always looked after Laila and when he heard of what Khadim did to her, he beat him up with his metal leg. Laila always loved going over to Tariq’s house because his parents loved her and it gave her a sense of a mother figure that she did not have. To me I feel as though a lack of a father or mother figure is very damaging to their self-of-steem. I also feel as though Mammy does genuinely love Laila but will never live up to her brothers.

Bad news had arrived that Noor and Ahmad had died in battle. Mammy was devastated and proceeded to go into a long period of depression. Mammy would dress in all black and would never leave her room. To me this isn’t fair for Laila and it showed. Laila had to do so much around the house and when Laila went to talk to her mother it was all about Noor and Ahmid. Nothing ever was about Laila. To me that’s not right. Yes her sons died and she is very upset, but she still has Laila who is striving to be a successful young girl and her mom isn’t there to help. But Babi assumed that role and comforted her and helped with her school work.

As the weeks went by things got really bad for Tariq’s family. His father was having a vast amount of heart attacks from all of the fighting in the surrounding areas that was getting worse and worse by the day. The city had now been divided up into quadrants and each was ruled by its own “king”. So now Laila couldn’t go to school or see some her friends anymore. Her mother decided to have a party to lighten the mood in the neighborhood. Everyone in the area had arrived and even Tariq and his parents were there. Later on in the party Tariq took Laila aside and wanted to talk to her alone. This was the first moment when they first started to flirt with each other and show some some sort of affection towards each other. But this would not be the last. The fighting continued to get worse in Kabul and Tariq had bad news for Laila. He was moving. She didn’t want to listen but he told her that he loved her and wanted to marry her and for her to come and stay with him wherever they were moving to. They started to fight for a while but then they started to kiss and proceeded to do the rest. Laila had given up her virginity before marriage which was forbidden. She would not dare tell her parents.

Tariq then moved to Pakistan to live a better life and Babi and Laila had talked about moving away before and tried to persuade Mammy to leave. She didn’t want to but eventually gave in to it all. They moved to Pakistan where they would be with Tariq’s family and Laila was overcome with joy. But then on moving day Laila was walking on the sidewalk by her house daydreaming about Tariq when she was hit by shrapnel from a bomb exploding not far down the street. She was badly injured and sent to a hospital nearby. This is where the story leaves off. I have really enjoyed the book so far and I am excited to see what happens. I believe that Mariam and Laila will somehow meet up but I am not quite sure. I think that at the end of the book all of the fighting will cease and Tariq will move back to marry Laila. I would not be surprised to see that Tariq and Laial do not marry each other though.